SILBURY HILL.—Silbury Hill is the largest artificial mound in Europe. It is not so large as the mound of Alyattes in Asia Minor, which Herodotus has described, and a modern traveller has ridden round. It is of greater dimensions than the second pyramid of Egypt. Stukeley is too ardent in the contemplation of this wonder of his own land, when he says, "I have no scruple to affirm it is the most magnificent mausoleum in the world, without excepting the Egyptian pyramids." But an artificial hill which covers 5 acres and 34 perches; which at the circumference of the base measures 2,027 feet; whose diameter at top is 120 feet; its sloping height 316 feet, and its perpendicular height 107 feet, is indeed a stupendous monument of human labour, of which the world can shew very few such examples. There can be no doubt whatever that the hill is entirely artificial. The great earthworks of a modern railway are the results of labour, assisted by science and stimulated by capital, employing itself for profit; but Silbury Hill in all likelihood was a gigantic effort of what has been called hero-worship, a labour for no direct or immediate utility, but to preserve the memory of some ruler, or lawgiver, or warrior, or priest. Multitudes lent their aid in the formation, and shouted or wept around it, when it had settled down into solidity under the dews and winds, and its slopes were covered with ever-springing grass. If it were a component part of the temple at Abury, it is still to be regarded, even more than the gathering together of the stone circles and avenues of that temple, as the work of great masses of the people labouring for some elevating and heart-stirring purpose. Their worship might be blind, cruel, guided by crafty men who governed them by terror or by delusion. But these enduring monuments shew the existence of some great and powerful impulses which led the people to achieve mighty things. There was a higher principle at work amongst them, however abused and perverted, than that of individual selfishness. The social principle was built upon some sort of reverence, whether of man, or of beings held to preside over the destinies of man.—*Old England.*

IMPORTANT MEETING AT BIRKENHEAD.—On Saturday evening last, a meeting of the rate-payers of Birkenhead and Claughton-cum-Grange, was held, in pursuance of public notice, at the Town-hall, in the former place, for the purpose of the bill for authorizing the purchase of the Monks' Ferry, and the bill for the construction of the Birkenhead docks, being submitted for consideration. The attendance was numerous, including most of the influential gentlemen of the township and neighbourhood. On the motion of J. S. Jackson, Esq., John Deane Case, Esq., was called to the chair. The following resolutions, proposed by Mr. Wm. Jackson, were carried, without a dissentient voice:—"That this meeting fully concur in the view taken respecting the purchase of the Monks' Ferry property, and approve of the commissioners purchasing the same, and sanction their application to parliament for the necessary power, and to raise the money to pay for it; and that the act now presented be approved of."—"That this meeting approve of the steps taken by the projectors of the Birkenhead docks, and approve of the plans as prepared by Mr. Rendall; and that the commissioners be authorized to petition parliament on behalf of the township in favour of the same, and that the bill now presented be approved of." Thanks were then voted to the chairman, and the meeting separated.—*Liverpool Journal.*

TURNPIKE TRUSTS.—In the House of Commons, February 12th, Lord Ebrington, pursuant to notice, asked the Home Secretary, whether it was the intention of her Majesty's government to introduce any measure, or the same measure which had been already proposed.—Sir J. Graham (Dorchester) said that a commission had been appointed to inquire into and report upon the subject of the administration of turnpike trusts in England. The commissioners had fully investigated the matter, and he expected that their report would be ready in a very short time; but before introducing any measure of the kind, he wished to have the advantage of receiving their report.

NEW MARKET.—The subject of a New Corn Market at Colchester is to be taken into consideration at a public meeting this day.

THE DRUID'S STONE.—While toiling along these wild wastes (in Portugal), I observed a little way to my left a pile of stones of rather a singular appearance, and rode up to it. It was a Druidical altar, and the most perfect and beautiful one of the kind which I had ever seen. It was circular, and consisted of stones immensely large and heavy at the bottom, which towards the top became thinner and thinner, having been fashioned by the hand of art to something of the shape of scollop shells. These were surmounted by a very large flat stone, which slanted down towards the south, where was a door. Three or four individuals might have taken shelter within the interior, in which was growing a small thorn tree. I gazed with reverence and awe upon the pile where the first colonies of Europe offered their worship to the Unknown God. The temples of the mighty and skilful Roman, comparatively of modern date, have crumbled to dust in its neighbourhood. The churches of the Arian Goth, his successor in power, have sunk beneath the earth, and are not to be found; and the mosques of the Moor, the conqueror of the Goth, where and what are they? Upon the rock, masses of hoary and vanishing ruin. Not so the Druid's stone; there it stands on the hill of winds, as strong and as freshly new as the day, perhaps 30 centuries back, when it was first raised by means which are a mystery. Earthquakes have heaved it, but its copestone has not fallen; rain floods have deluged it, but failed to sweep it from its station; the burning sun has flashed upon it, but neither split nor crumbled it; and Time, stern old Time, has rubbed it with his iron tooth, and with what effect, let those who view it declare. There it stands, and he who wishes to study the literature, the learning, and the history of the ancient Celt and Cymbrian, may gaze on its broad covering, and glean from that blank stone the whole known amount. The Roman has left behind him his deathless writings, his history, and his songs; the Goth his liturgy, his traditions, and the germs of noble institutions; the Moor his chivalry, his discoveries in medicine, and the foundations of modern commerce: and where is the memorial of the Druidic races? Yonder; that pile of eternal stone!—*Borrow's Bible in Spain.*

OPENING OF THE TAME VALLEY CANAL.—Wednesday week being the day fixed for opening the Tame Valley Canal, the committee, accompanied by some of the proprietors, the company's engineer, their treasurer, solicitor, clerk, and other officers, proceeded from this town in two boats along the improved line of canal to the point of junction with the Tame Valley Canal at Tipton, where they found the contractors, and many boats laden with coal, iron, and ironstone. The Tame Valley Canal unites at this point with the Walsall Canal, and passes from thence through Tipton, West Bromwich, Perry Barr, Wilton, and Aston, to Salford Bridge, into another canal of the company, called the Fazeley Canal. The committee then proceeded to open the Tame Valley Canal, passing into it from the Walsall Canal, followed by the contractors and their friends, and the trading boats, with flags, banners, and a band of music, amidst the shouts and loud greetings of a large assemblage of the neighbouring population. By means of this very valuable and important communication, coal, iron, and merchandize of all kinds will be conveyed at a reduced cost both in tonnage and haulage from the South Staffordshire mineral district to the lower part of the town of Birmingham, and the large and populous agricultural district on the line and in the neighbourhood of the Tame Valley Canal; also, by the route of the Fazeley, Coventry, Oxford, and Grand Junction Canals, to Fazeley, Tamworth, Coventry, Northampton, Banbury, Oxford, and other markets in the midland counties, as likewise to the metropolis. The works of the Tame Valley Canal have been executed in the most substantial manner, under the superintendence of the company's talented engineers.—*Birmingham Gazette.*

At a meeting of a Board of Directors of the Dock Company on Monday week, it was resolved to carry into execution the wishes of the *Great Britain* Steam Ship Company, in the removal of obstacles preventing her floating into Cumberland Basin; the latter company giving an indemnity for loss. Repairs to be completed by the 19th of March.—*Bristol Paper.*

WAGES IN PARIS.—The wages of the workmen in Paris are much lower than in London. The class of labourers to whom my observations hitherto have chiefly referred, namely—stone-masons, paviours, hodmen, &c. do not earn, even in the finest weather and longest days, more than from two francs and a half to three francs and a half; or from two shillings and a penny to two shillings and elevenpence per day. The wages of mechanics and artisans are a little better, though, in different trades, the amount of earnings varies considerably. Carpenters average four francs a day; upholsterers, from three to four francs; hatters, from four to five francs; tailors, from three to five francs, according to the nature of the work and the abilities of the workmen; watchmakers earn from three to four francs, or from half-a-crown to four and twopence; and jewellers do the same. Those workmen who receive the best wages are marble-cutters and stone-cutters, their daily earnings averaging from five to six francs, or from four and twopence to five shillings. Next to them are the printers, whose wages average from four to five francs. The worst-paid workmen in Paris are the shoemakers. Their wages vary from two francs to two and a half francs per day, or from ten shillings to twelve and sixpence per week. They are, in fact, no better paid for their labour than the hodmen who work at new buildings, or the paviours who toil in the streets. The exceeding lowness of the wages which the shoemakers receive in Paris, and, indeed, in all parts of France, accounts for the very great cheapness of French boots and shoes as compared with those which are made in England. Boots, as good as those which cost twenty-eight or thirty shillings here, can be procured in Paris for fourteen or fifteen shillings. And yet, low as is the rate of wages in Paris, compared with what our operatives receive in London, the working classes in that city may live more comfortably on their earnings, provided they are economical, than the same classes can on their wages in London.—*Paris and its People.*

PHOTOGENIC LITHOGRAPHY.—From Rome we learn that a copper-plate engraver, Signor Lanzaruolo, has discovered a method of fixing on the lithographic stone the images obtained by the daguerreotype; so that a large number of impressions can be taken on the instant. The artist has presented to the Pope proofs of several of the monuments of the eternal city, rendered by this process, which are said to be excellent. Letters from the same city mention a report, that though full of strangers, including many of our own sight-loving public, there would be no carnival this year in the papal city.—*Athenæum.*

Sir W. Ross, painter to her Majesty the Queen of England, has arrived at Brussels. The artist went, on the 17th, to the Palace of Laeken, where he obtained the honour of a first sitting of the Queen, whose portrait in miniature, and that of the young Princess Charlotte, he is to paint for the Queen of England.

The celebrated historical painter and director of the Academy of Arts at Florence, Professor Pietro Benvenuti, died in that city the week before last, after a long and painful illness, at the age of 75.

A lecture on the principles and practice of sculpture, with illustrations, was delivered by Mr. Keyworth, sculptor, before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Hull, on Tuesday night week, and was greatly applauded.

During the last few days, Mr. Francis, the sculptor, has been at Windsor, taking Prince Albert's directions for a statue of the late Duke of Saxe Gotha.

SUNDERLAND PIERS.—Excavating operations have commenced near to the head of the south pier at this port, which we understand are intended for the formation of a slip wash for the surge of the tide, in order to prevent the heavy swell to which the harbour is now subject.—*Sunderland Herald.*

Northumberland House is undergoing a course of re-embellishment, preparatory to the arrival of the Duke and Duchess from Alnwick Castle for the season.

The President of the Royal Society appointed the 2nd, 16th, and 30th of the present month, for his *soirées* to the Fellows of that learned body.

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